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| Työn nimi-Arbetets titel-Title Rites & Wrongs : Ethnic Imaginings and the Social Construction of Moral Identity among Southwest China's Miao | | |
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| Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract This is a study about communal self-perceptions and collective identities that are formed as a response, critique, or contestation to prepositionings from the level of state. The aim of this study is to investigate the way personal narratives are intertwined with accounts of national history. The theoretical contribution of this study is to the anthropological debates on morality and ethnic identity while the ethnographic data presented address Southeast Asian and minority studies. This investigation is based on independent ethnographic research conducted during a total of 20 months (2002-2003, 2006-2007) in Yunnan and Guizhou provinces of the People's Republic of China. Miao/Hmong areas were also visited in Thailand, Myanmar, Vietnam, and Lao PDR. Chapter 1 (Locating the Field) contextualizes gathered ethnographic data while Chapter 2 (Methodology) expounds on anthropological research methods. The theoretical focus of this study is on the anthropology of morality (Ch. 3-5: themes of moral arenas and traditions) and ethnic identity (Ch. 6-9: themes on belonging, exemplarity, authenticity, and liminality). Questions of structure and agency are considered extensively in Chapters 10 and 11. Key anthropological sources are from White (1981), Urban (1996), the Comaroffs (1992), Schein (2000), Dawson (1978), and Teppo (2004). Primary sources stem from extensive participant-observation, autobiographical writings by two Miao women, and thematic interviews of Chinese minority as well as majority informants. The ethnographic data presented revolve around the lives of two young Miao women. Through this case study the process of narrativization is examined as an impulse to moralize reality. I argue that ethnic meta-narratives highlight where dialogics of othering are at play. The Miao are an external minority "Other" that function as a conceptual confirmation of the existence of the Chinese majority, or Han essence of the state. The Chinese "body ethnic" is conceptualized as an internal other and as a point of tangency where the Chinese state is contiguous with what lies beyond. Rhetoric of moral ethnicity is utilized by the state to implement and justify the process of nationalism as well as to evade or reinterpret it. This study indicates that a identities are at play within several distinct, occasionally overlapping, and, at times, contesting cultural spheres that constitute moral guidelines of "rites and wrongs," or varying demands and definitions of one's ethnic identity. Tämä opinnäytetyö koskee Kiinan miao-vähemmistön yhteisöllisiä omakuvia ja kollektiivisia identiteettejä, jotka rakentuvat reaktioina, kritiikkeinä tai vastatoimina valtiotason asetelmille. Tutkimus pohjautuu 20 kuukauden itsenäiseen etnografiseen kenttätööhön, joka tehtiin Kaakkois-Aasian Kultaisen kolmion alueella (Kiina, Thaimaa, Lao PDR, Vietnam ja Myanmar). Aineisto etnisyyden moraliteeteista kontribuoi poliittisen antropologian, Kaakkois-Aasian tutkimuksen ja vähemmistötutkimuksen diskursseihin. | | |
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